DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 223 912 CG 016 307

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TITLE Violence and Other Bases of Power in Marriage.
SPONS AGENCY National Inst. of Mental Health (DHHS), Rockville, Md. National Center for the Control and Prevention of Rape.
PUB DATE Aug 81
GRANT NIMH-R01-MH-30193
NOTE 48p.; Paper presented at the Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association (89th, Los Angeles, CA, August 24-26, 1981).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Battered Women; Decision Making; Family Life; Family Problems; *Family Structure; *Individual Power; Interpersonal Relationship; *Marriage; *Power Structure; Spouses; *Violence

ABSTRACT

It has often been suggested that knowledge of the underlying power sturcture is essential to understanding the day-to-day functioning of the nuclear family and that such knowledge may be of special relevance for understanding violence between husbands and wives. To explore the relationship of the family power structure (e.g., wife-dominant, equalitarian, or husband-dominant) to physical violence, the reports of in-depth structured interviews with 137 battered women and 137 control women whose marriages were designated no violence, low violence, or high violence, based on the husband's level of violence, were analyzed. Analyses of responses indicated that high violence husbands made nearly all family decisions, had low external resources compared to less violent men, but were relatively high in resources compared to their wives. High violence husbands, compared to other men, also used all of the social bases of power except reward and informational power. The data suggest the importance of physical violence as a means of controlling other family members. The findings also suggest the usefulness of examining violence in marriage as a form of influence and perspectives that may be addressed in future research on family violence. (PAS)

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ED223912

VIOLENCE AND OTHER BASES OF POWER IN MARRIAGE

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Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Psychological Association, Los Angeles, California, 1981. This study was supported by the National Institute of Mental Health Grant R01 MH 30193 from the Rape Center.

CG 016307

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Violence and Other Bases of Power in Marriage

It has often been suggested that knowledge of the underlying power structure is essential to understanding the day to day functioning of the nuclear family (eg., Goode, 1971; Skolnick and Skolnick, 1971). Such knowledge may be of special relevance for understanding violence between husbands and wives. In this paper we will explore the usefullness of various theoretical power perspectives for understanding wife battering.

Few would question the proposition that wife battering is a serious problem in our society today. Estimates of the number of battered wives in the United States range from two million to 28 million (Langley and Levy, 1977; Straus, Gelles, and Steinmetz, 1980). With increasing recognition of this problem, there have been more and more studies which attempt to understand various aspects of the problem. Research has outlined some of the reasons the barttered wife stays in the marriage, the background and personality characteristics of both the battering husband and his wife, the effects of alcohol use upon violence, and the ways in which violent behavior in family contexts is socialized (eg., Frieze, 1979; Frieze and Knoble, 1980; Straus, et al.1980; Walker, 1979). However, relatively little research has analyzed the violent family in terms of power utilization by various family members.

This study also adds to the exisiting literature on family violence by examining severely violent families as well as families with less violence. Both of these types of families are compared to families without marital violence.

Conjugal Violence as Power

One of the first to discuss the interrelationship of violence with other forms of family power was Goode (1971). He pointed out that the family is a power system and that like all other social units, its functioning rests ultimately on force or the threat of force. Goode sees violence not only as the ultimate power resource in the resolution of conflict, but also as an invisible force that underlies and maintains the (male-dominant) family system. More recently, Straus, et al (1980) observed that violence is used as a mechanism to control the behavior of other family members. This reiterates an earlier statement by Straus (1978) that most, if not all, wife beatings are part of a family power struggle. He suggests that it may take only one such incident to permanently change the balance of power toward a strongly husband-dominant pattern since there is always the implicit threat that the husband will use violence again to enforce his wishes.

Others have also noted the instrumental nature of husband-violence. Hilberman and Munson (1977) found in their study of battered women that husband violence tended to erupt in any situation in which the husband did not get his way. Gelles (1974) also supports the idea that husband violence is instrumental. In his study of violent families, he found that male violence was most often preceeded and/or accompanied by threats, verbal abuse, and aggression against objects. On the other hand, female violence (which was less common overall) was not accompanied by threats, and thus was more often expressive or protective. Gelles saw the violence of husbands as a more calculated attempt to influence.

Family Decision Making--Who Has the Power?

The most prevalent conceptualization of power in the family power literature is as a concise way of characterizing how the family makes group choices (Turk, 1975). Group choice used in a broad sense refers to any situation in which there are alternatives and in which one or more family member's selection of an alternative has direct consequences for the family.

Investigators interested in marital power have subsequently conceptualized and operationalized power as though it were synonomous with decision making (McDonald, 1975). Such research views power as being on a continuum from complete husband dominance to complete wife dominance with equalitarianism being on the midpoint of the continuum. This approach originates in the earlier work of Blood and Wolfe (1960). In the traditional family, the husband makes most of the decisions and both husband and wife are satisfied with this state of affairs (eg., Blood and Wolfe, 1960; Corrales, 1975; Kolb and Straus, 1097; Safilios-Rothschild, 1967).

O'Brien (1971) has related the traditional perspective of husband dominance to an understanding of wife battering. According to O'Brien, if the husband does not feel that he is fulfilling his expected dominant male role, he may turn to violence to reassert this dominance. Others have also suggested that wife battering is most likely to occur in families in which the traditional pattern of male dominance is threatened (eg., Goode, 1971; Kumagai and O'Donoghue, 1978; Toch, 1969; Whitehurst, 1974). Thus, recent changes in role expectations for women are often cited as a reason for changes in the expected pattern of male dominance, and as an explanation for increasing wife abuse.

Another viewpoint is that marital violence is more likely to occur in equalitarian marriages where the location of power is at least somewhat ambiguous (Kumagai and O'Donoghue, 1978). A similar view was expressed in an anecedote relayed by Strauss et al (1980) in which the wife characterizes the marriage as a war in which both she and her husband were struggling to be the boss.

Although the theories discussed so far would suggest that violence would be higher in either wife dominant or equalitarian marriages, other theorists might predict that clear patterns of husband dominance would increase wife battering. Such a prediction derives from societal level analyses of the nature of power and violence. For example, Simmel's (1955) discussion of how power operates in society as a whole suggests that the hierarchial nature of most social systems makes them prone to violence. Similarly, Grimshaw (1970) observes that violence most frequently occurs between persons who are differentiated into superior-subordinate roles. Thus, violence might be expected to be lowest in equalitarian or democratic marriages, especially if both spouses subscribe to modern (equalitarian) expectations for marital decision making. Straus et al. (1980) also support this conception empirically since they find that wife battering is more common in homes in which the power is concentrated in the hands of the husband. In their study, the least amount of battering occured in democratic households or in families where all decisions are shared.

Thus, support can be found in the exisiting literature for the idea that violence is related to wife-dominant, equalitarian, or husband dominate family power structures. This study will attempt to verify which is the more empirically supported pattern. However, it should be

noted that all of the explanations we have reviewed deal with preconditions for violence. Once violence has been used, it may be quite effective in altering the existing power structure so that the husband becomes more dominant. Thus, we expect that husband dominance will be the most typical dominance pattern among couples where wife battering occurs. On the other hand, low violence may typify equalitarian marriages.

Alternative Conceptualizations of Family Power.

Although the decision making approach to marital power is widely used in family research, it has been criticized on both conceptual and methodological grounds (eg., Gillespie, 1971; McDonald, 1975; 1980; Olson and Rabunsky, 1972; Sprey, 1972; Safilios-Rothschild, 1970). Many of these criticisms center around the idea that power means that one person wins and another loses and that it is only relevant in situations of disagreement (eg., Olson and Rabunsky, 1972; McDonald, 1980; Sprey, 1972). As McDonald and Sprey have pointed out, power may suppress potentially conflictual situations and help to define the way the family operates. Thus, violence may have power implications even when it is not exercised in direct relation to a particular conflict or decision.

Another criticism has been made by Safilios-Rothschild (1970) and Gillespie (1971) who point out that the most commonly used indices of decision making assume that all decisions are of equal importance. Common sense suggests that some decisions are more important than others. However, those which are considered more or less important may differ across families. Furthermore, decisions which are being made by one person may have been strongly influenced by the spouse who has

"orchestration" power in the relationship. This person may exercise power through making only the important decisions that determine the nature of family life, without having to be bothered with relatively minor day-to-day decisions. These day-to-day decisions may then have to be made by the other spouse within the confines of the major decisions already made by someone else. If such factors are operating, marriages that appear to be equalitarian according to the number of decisions being made, may actually be dominated by the spouse with "orchestration" power (Safilios-Rothschild, 1970). Empirical demonstration of this phenomenon was found by Brinkerhoff and Lupri (1978). They reported that the wives in their study derived most of their decision-making power from decisions considered to be unimportant by both spouses.

These and other limitations of the decision-making approach to marital power have led McDonald (1980) to call for the development and utilization of a wider range of measures for family power. Following this advice, we have decided to investigate the relationship of wife battering to marital power by examining the resources and power bases available to each spouse as well as looking at who makes decisions.

Resource Theory of Family Power

Interest in the area of family power was sparked to a large extent by Blood and Wolfe's (1960) elaboration of a resource theory of family power. According to their original formulation, the power to make decisions within the family stems from the resources that the individual can provide to meet the needs of his (sic) marriage partner and to upgrade his decision-making skills. In this model resources are viewed as being drawn from the external environment. Thus, the comparative participation of the husband and wife in the external system determines

how much power they will have in the family (Blood, 1963). Education, occupation, income and social participation were the resources examined in their initial study (Blood and Wolfe, 1960). Subsequent research has continued to test this basic model although some changes have been made (McDonald, 1980).

Rodman (1972) presented a version of the resource model in which the distribution of marital power results from both the comparative resources of the husband and the wife and the cultural or subcultural expectations of who should hold power in the marriage. The importance of adding this normative component to the model was demonstrated in a study by Burr, Ahern, and Knowles (1977) who found that the normative dimension accounted for most of the variance in students' perceptions of parental decision making while the relative resources of their parents had little relation to their decision making.

Even before these empirical findings called into question the resource theory, Herr (1963) noted that in order for resource theory to be valid, the value placed on various types of resources by each spouse must be considered. Thus, the greater the difference between the value to the wife of the husband's resources and the value to her of the resources she might acquire outside the marriage, the greater the power of the husband (see also Willis and Frieze, 1980). This revision of the original theory was then able to account for the number of wives who remained in marriages where they had low power even though few resources were being supplied by their husbands. In this case the resources available to them outside the marriage were perceived as being even lower than the level obtained within the marriage. Although this addition to the theory is important, it is based on the assumption that

each partner considers the possibility of separation or divorce and subsequent remarriage. It also assumes that all resources can be reduced to economic resources.

Few would argue today that all resources are economic or are readily reducible to monetary equivalents. Nonecomonic resources must also be considered in attempting to understand family power (McDonald, 1980; Safilios-Rothschild, 1970; 1976; Scanzoni, 1979). Of major importance may be intangible, interpersonal rewards such as affection, sex, and companionship.

Another type of resource which has not generally been examined in the family power literature is the use or threatened use of physical force. Goode (1971) calls this the "ultimate resource". However, he goes on to state that most people do not willingly choose to use overt force if they can use other means of getting what they want. The use of force has other costs associated with it and it can decrease the possibility of achieving other goals such as love. According to Goode, individuals are impelled to use overt force when they lack other resources which might yield them power. Thus, the more other resources an individual can command, the less that person will attempt to use physical force as a power strategy.

A similar prediction was made by Grimshaw (1970) in regards to the use of power in social systems of all types. According to Grimshaw, if a member of a superordinate status group loses his advantaged skills, talents, or other resources, he may turn to violence as an alternative power source. Following similar reasoning, O'Brien (1971) predicts that violent behavior would be disproportionately prevalent in families where the traditionally dominant male fails to possess the superior skills,

talents, or other resources which are expected to accompany his higher status in the family.

O'Brien found empirical support for this resource deficiency theory of family violence in interviews done with couples filing for divorce. Overall, about 1/6 of all the couples cited physical violence as a factor in the divorce. The couples where violence was a factor were also more likely to have a husband who was seriously dissatisfied with his job, who had not completed high school, whose income was lower than his wife's, whose occupational level was lower than his father-in-law's, and whose (low) income was a source of conflict in the marriage. Similar results were reported by Gelles (1974) who found that the higher the husband's education level, the lower the likelihood of violence. Straus (1976), in a general survey of American families, also reports that when the wife had high resources relative to the husband, the level of violence was increased. Straus and Gelles (Straus, et al., 1980) also found that men who strived to make all the decisions in the family, but who lacked the key educational, employment, and income resources tended to be more violent toward their wives than men who dominated but who also possessed more education, more money, and more prestigious jobs. They concluded that husbands were most likely to resort to violence and other types of physical coercion when they already have power, but when they have few resources to legitimize their power.

Others have looked at the resources of the battered wives, rather than their husbands. In general, it appears as though these women have low levels of resources. They have been observed to have low educational levels (Eisenberg and Micklow, 1977); few financial resources (Martin, 1976); and few job skills (Carlson, 1977;

Ridington, 1978). However, this may represent a sample bias in the battered women studied. Such characteristics are most typical of battered women who go to shelters or safe houses. Battered women identified in other ways may not share these characteristics of having low resources (Frieze, Knoble, Washburn, and Zomnir, 1980). Gelles (1976) also found that the amount of resources controlled by a battered woman related to whether she stayed in the violent marriage or not, but not to her being battered in the first place.

Once again, in attempting to look at the resources controlled by battered women and their husbands, it must be kept in mind that once the violence has occured, the resources may change. Battering husbands may undermine or subtract from the resources of their wives by refusing to allow them to work or to maintain a good job, monitoring their activities, discouraging them from having social contacts with friends, neighbors, or relatives, and otherwise controlling their lives (Frieze, et al., 1980; Hilberman and Munson, 1977). In the present study, the relative resources of battered women and their husbands are compared to the relative levels of husband and wife resources in marriages with low levels of violence and those with no violence. In addition to economic resources, affection based resources are also examined along with social participation and physical size resources. It is hypothesized that in the most violent marriages, the wives will have fewer economic, social participation, and physical size resources relative to the husband than other groups of women. It was also anticipated that battering husbands would have fewer resources than less violent men. Families with low levels of violence were expected to be intermediate on these two dimensions.

Bases of Power.

In the decision-making approach to marital power, power is equated with being able to make decisions of all types. Resource theory views power as resulting from the contributions of each partner to the marriage. These contributions derive from their relative amounts of economic or other resources. A third approach to marital power views it as one aspect of interaction in a social relationship (Cartwright, 1959). French and Raven (1959) have typologized the kinds of power to which people have access in the context of social relationships into six bases of power. Within this framework, the term "power base" refers to the particular nature of the relationship between the influencer and the person being influenced, which is the source of the power (Raven, 1965). The six power bases identified are: (1) Reward. Power based on an explicit or implicit promise of giving the other person something in return for their compliance; (2) Coercion. Power based on explicit or implicit threats of doing something negative to the other person unless they comply; (3) Referent. Power based on an appeal to the similarity or liking within the couple; (4) Legitimate. Power based on normative expectations of who should have the power in a given situation; (5) Expert. Power based on the superior knowledge or skills of the person seeking compliance; and (6) Informational. Power based on unique information possessed by the person seeking compliance. Although various modifications have been made to this system, perhaps the most relevant for understanding family power was the addition by Raven and Kruglanski (1970) of helplessness as a special subcategory of legitimate power. Helpless power is exerted when one appeals to the norm of social responsibility and obtains compliance by appearing to be so helpless

that someone else must step in.

These six bases of power are useful in understanding the consequences of exerting power. Depending on the base of power used, the person being influenced will be more or less dependent upon the one exerting power, will have positive or negative feelings about this person, and will be influenced in ways which affect only their external behaviors or will change inner feelings and attitudes as well (see Raven, et al., 1975; Frieze et al., 1978).

As has been discussed, various theorists have suggested ways of extending resource theory to include normative aspects of power McDonald, 1977; Safilios-Rothschild, 1970), affective and other personal resources (Safilios-Rothschild, 1976), and force or threats of force (Goode, 1971) in addition to the original set of economic resources. As this work has progressed, it has become more and more similar to the French and Raven model. But, the French and Raven model still provides a unique contribution of allowing the researcher to assess the degree of compliance and other consequences of power usage as well as the means by which this compliance is obtained. Two husbands may be equally powerful in getting what they want from their wives, but if one owes his power to violence and the other to an appeal to their mutual relationship (coercive versus referent power), one would expect many differences in the two couples in their levels of marital satisfaction, mutual hostility, and the degree of surveillance used in the relationship (Raven, et al., 1975).

The power base perspective also allows us to look more closely at the types of powers exercised by men and women. Several studies have indicated that men and women do not have equal access to and equal

success in using the six power bases. Johnson (1976) summarizes a number of studies finding that males and females perceive of reward, coercion, legitimate, expert, and informational power as masculine forms of power while referent, helplessness, and indirect informational power are more associated with women. Women are also seen as using false information, nagging (a form of coercion), and sexuality (either reward or coercion depending on how it is used) to influence others.

Other research has supported the idea that men and women do differ in the ways they use power. Falbo and Peplau (1980) found that men made more use of direct power attempts while women were more indirect in their use of power in interpersonal relationships. Men are also more likely to wield power based on concrete resources such as money, knowledge, position, and physical strength since they have more of these resources. Women, on the other hand, are limited to power based on personal resources, such as affection and sexuality. And finally, women are expected to be less competent than men so they are more likely to use helpless power than men (Johnson, 1976). Falbo, Hazen and Linimon (in press) further found that those using power bases associated more with the other sex were liked less and regarded as less competent than those using the types of power more stereotypically associated with their own sex. Zellman and Connor (1973) also noted that women were viewed negatively when they transmitted information in a direct rather than in a hesitant and soft-spoken manner. Thus, fear of social disapproval as well as previous experience may serve to limit the power bases available to women.

These studies of the use of various power bases by men and women have often been limited to college students and have not specifically analyzed the use of the various power bases in marital situations. In one of the studies which did do this, Raven, Centers, and Rodrigues (1975) found that referent and expert power were the most commonly used power bases, with wives using referent power more, and husbands using more expert power. Coercive power was rarely reported and tended to be found only in couples unhappy in their marriages. Use of the various power bases was also found to differ as a function of the beliefs about marriage held by the couple. For example, referent power was more frequently reported by couples valuing companionship and affection in marriage.

Of particular importance to the present study was the use of coercion. Under what conditions is coercion used as a base of power in marriage? What other bases of power are and are not associated with the use of physical coercion? And, what are the power consequences of using physical coercion to influence one's spouse?

Kipnis (1976) reports that there are a number of types of coercion used in marriages. These include emotional withdrawal, making the other person miserable, getting angry, threatening to use physical force, and threatening to leave. Interestingly, he does not include actual physical violence directed against the spouse or other forms of violence as a power base. He also concludes that the types of threats used in marital conflicts were vague, without reference to specific consequences. However, we question this last conclusion, since there is clear evidence that physical violence is used in marriage as a means of influence (eg, Martin, 1976).

Several authors have suggested that having the ability to coerce others tempts one to use this power base (Deustch and Krauss, 1960; Kipnis, 1976; Tedeschi, Lindskold, Horai, and Gahagan, 1969). This idea is remenescent of the idea discussed earlier that dominant husbands are the most likely to use violence and that husbands in equalitarian relationships with relatively less power would not be violent.

But, once again, the opposite idea can also be found in the literature. Goodstadt and Hjelle (1973) suggest that the individual is increasingly tempted to exert coercive means of influence as his expectations of being influential through other means are lowered. From this perspective, men who lack the resources to use other bases of power, or the self confidence in their abilities to use these other bases, would be more likely to use coercion. This parallels the position that husbands low in resources would show a greater tendency toward violence.

In order to understand the use of coercive power in violent relationships it is helpful to look at other correlates of coercive power in the more general literature on bases of power. First, Raven and Kruglanski (1970) note that only through the use of violence can an individual be sure that he, rather than others people or other factors controls the the situation. Of course, this control is achieved partially through the greater surveillance which must accompany successful coercive power. When people are forced to do something through coercion, their first response is often to attempt to leave the situation if that is at all possible. When it is not, the person complies, but unwillingly and if the influencer does not monitor the compliance, the person will stop complying. Coercive power also results

in the target of influence disliking the more powerful person. Since, such negative feelings would tend to undermine future use of referent or personal (affectionate) power bases, coercion power use might also cause restrictions in the other power bases available (Raven, 1974; Raven and Kruglanski, 1970).

Perhaps for some of these reasons, Kipnis (1976) also believes that coercive power is most often used when the target of influence is seen as dissimiliar from oneself. Since traditional men see themselves as quite different from women (and vise versa), there should be more use of coercion and other strong means of influence in situations where traditional men and women must continually interact and attempt to influence one another, such as marriage. Coercion has also been found to be used more with people who are not liked (Michener and Schwertfeger, 1972) or who are not trusted (Gamson, 1968). All of this suggests that violent coercive power will be most used in marriages in which there is distrust and hostility, and in which both spouses hold traditional sex role beliefs. In such situations, the person using coercive power may not care as much about the negative consequences.

Although we were not able to clearly derive a prediction from the literature, we hypothesized that the use of coercive power as a means of influence would be associated with husbands having relatively low levels of resources relative to other men, but high relative resources vis a vis their wives. It was also anticipated that the use of violent coercion would be inversely related to the use of referent and personal reward power bases.

METHOD

Sample

In order to more fully investigate the uses of power by husbands and wives in violent and nonviolent marriages, data from a larger study of 137 battered women and 137 control women was analyzed. The battered women consisted of a sample of women who had reported that they were victims of physical violence from their husbands. As shown in Table 1, battered women were identified from Women's shelters, from the publically available list of women who had filed Pennsylvania Act 218 (a legal act in Pennsylvania which allows a person to force a physically violent family member to leave the home), and from posted notices in various communities in the Pittsburgh area. For each of the 137 battered women, a matched control woman was also interviewed using the same interview schedule. Matching was done by finding another married (or formally married) woman from the same neighborhood as the battered woman. Controls were identified through letters sent to women in the same block and from advertisments posted in the same locations as had been used for the battered women responding to posted notices. In this case the posted notices asked for women to volunteer for a study of marriage dynamics.

Insert Table 1 about here

After the interviews were completed, we found that 48 of the Control group women had also been physically assaulted by their husbands. These women were considered as a separate "Battered-Control" group. For more details on the specific characteristics of these three groups, see Frieze, Knoble, Washburn, and Zomnir (1980).

Procedure

All subjects were asked to respond to a structured interview which assessed general demographic information, the family backgrounds of the wife and the husband, specifics of any violence experiences in the marriage, help seeking behaviors of various types, and a number of other questions. Within the course of this interview, three types of questions were asked about power. These included questions about specific power resources controlled by the wife and by her husband, who tended to make various types of family decisions, and how each of them used the French and Raven power bases.

Interviews generally took from 1 1/2 to 3 hours. All interviews were done by trained female interviewers. After the interviews were completed, subjects were asked their reactions to the interview. Most of the women were quite positive about their experience. Those women who were upset were encouraged to talk about their feelings and were given emotional support by the interviewer. During the interview and afterwards, the interviewers attempted to be as nonjudgmental as possible.

Subjects were given $10 for participation. They were also given information about wife battering and where women with this problem could go for help. All questions were answered as fully as possible.

Violence Level

Violence levels within the marriage were assessed by general questions and by specific questions about what was done by the husband to the wife and by the wife to the husband the first time and on the occasion of their worst violence. The consequences of these violent acts were also recorded. For the purposes of this study, the consequences of husband's worst violence were used as our measure of the level of violence in the family. We felt that this was a more accurate measure of the amount of violence than his specific violent acts since an act of violence such as a push or slap might range from having no real consequences to being quite severe, depending upon the amount of force exerted. These violent consequences were first coded into 7 categories as outlined below. Intercoder reliability was at least 80% for all raters.

Consequences of Husband's Violence

1. No violence used.

2. Force used, but no resulting hurt.

3. No physical injury, but some pain or damage (tearing clothing, broken eyeglasses, etc.).

4. Simple, superficial injuries (splinters, bruises, cuts, black eye, loss of hair, etc.).

5. Severe superficial injuries (severe bruises, cuts, or burns, mild concussion, black eye needing medical attention).

6. Severe physical or emotional trauma (traumatized joint spinal injury, pelvic injury, broken bones, severe head injury, internal injuries requiring surgery, miscarriage, psychotic episode requiring hospitalization).

7. Extreme and permanent injury (injuries requiring a hysterectomy, cholostomy, or bowel resection, permanent joint damage or head injuries).

Once this 7 point scale was established, we found that it was somewhat unwieldly. We felt that it was important to distinguish between the severely battered women and the women who had only experienced low levels of violence. Therefore, the 7 point scales were further subdivided into three groups as shown in Table 2. A value of 1 classified the family as a No Violence family. Values of 2, 3, or 4 were considered Low Violence while values of 5, 6, and 7 were classified as High Violence. As further shown in Table 2, relatively more of the Control-Battered group were in the Low Violence classification. A high proportion of the Battered Group fell into the High Violence group. Using these criteria, there were 88 women in the No Violence group, 87 in the Low Violence group, and 97 in the High Violence group.

Insert Table 2 about here

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Resources

Table 3 indicates the resources controlled by husbands and wives in the three violence groups. In order to compare the three types of marriages, one way analyses of variance were done across the three groups separately for husbands and for wives. As can be seen, the High

Violence men did not differ from the other men in their age, height, weight, or income level. They were lower in education level and had fewer friends than the other men. They were also less likely to use affectionate types of resources such as giving presents, being affectionate, or being generally nice to their wives. The only resources they did have more of were things they directly controlled: having spending money to spend without accounting to their wives and spending time away from the home.

Insert Table 3 about here

Wives showed even fewer differences in resources. The wives in the High Violence families (the women typically identified as "Battered Women"), were younger, had less education, and had fewer friends than the other women. These women also spent less time away from the family. On the other hand, the High Violence wives also made less use of affectionate resources (being physically affectionate and generally nice to their husbands) than other women.

These results tend to support the idea that men turn to violence in their families because they lack other resources for exerting power, although the results here are not unambiguous. The wives of the High Violence men also lacked resources. Thus, within their own families, these men may have been relatively high in resources. In order to look at this possiblity, husband-wife difference scores were created for each of the resource variables. These difference scores were then analyzed across the three violence groups through one-way analyses of variance. Results are shown in Table 4.

Insert Table 4 about here

Looking first at the High Violence group difference scores, it can be seen that these men generally controlled more resources than their wives (indicated by positive difference scores). Even for those resources which were more controlled by the wife, the High Violence husbands still had relatively more of these resources than the other men.

A second point which can be noted in Table 4 is that overall, men tended to control more of the standard types of power resources such as height, weight, income, and spending money than women. On the other hand, the women were more likely to use personal power resources such as being affectionate, giving presents, and being nice. These data clearly correspond with the types of power resources stereotypically associated with women and men (Johnson, 1976).

Finally, Table 4 indicates that the High Violence men are relatively more powerful than either of the other groups of men. This relative difference was significant for spending time away from the family and spending money. Although other differences were not significantly different across the three groups, the differences always tended to be in the direction of the High Violence group having more access to resources than his wife, except for the affectionate resources. For these, the High Violence men were least likely to be as affectionate as their wives. This may suggest that rather than being a power basis for the wives of the High Violence men, these "resources" are actually indicators of the wives lower status in these marriages, or may represent the wives' attempts to decrease their husbands' violence.

Decision Making

Another index of power in marriage is who makes the decisions. Our questionnaire assessed decision making in six areas: where the couple goes when they go out together, whose friends they generally see (the husband's or the wife's), who decides about major purchases for the household, who initiates sex, who generally wins when they have major disagreements, and how they handle disagreements about raising the children. All of these questions except the one about sex were answered on 5 point scales ranging from (1)Husband always decides to (5)Wife always decides. The sexuality question was based on a 3 point scale in response to the question of who generally initiates sex: (1)Husband, (2)Both, and (3)Wife. Results of the responses of the three groups to these questions were again analyzed through one-way analyses of variance as shown in Table 5.

Insert Table 5 about here

As can be seen in Table 5, the men in the High Violence group were most likely to make the decisions in all of these areas except how to raise the children (the area of power most often associated with traditional role divisions of authority). There was also no difference between the groups in how often the husband was the sexual iniator. Thus, once again, these data offer little support for the idea that men resort to violence as a means of getting their way because they are unable to do so without the violence. However, it is also possible that these decision making patterns are a result of the violence. With data collected at one point in time (after a good deal of violence had already occured), this is impossible to determine. Table 5 indicates

that the most equalitarian marriages were the non- violent marriages.

Table 6 presents another way of looking the the marital decision making in all of the groups. A factor analysis of the six types of decision making was done. The two resulting factors with eigenvalues over 1.0 were rotated and factor scores for these factors were created. The first factor appeared to be the overall decision-making factor with high loadings for decisions about where to go as a couple, whose friends to see, major purchases, and winning arguments. Decisions about raising children loaded on a separate factor. These data indicate that all decisions in these families tend to be made by the same person or by the couple as a unit. There was no support here for the idea that some husbands make only the important decisions (unless all of these decisions would be considered the important ones). We were not sure why the decisions about children formed a unique constellation. This finding deserves further research.

Insert Tables 6 and 7 about here

Another analysis was done to see how the various resources of the husbands and wives related to the decision making patterns. A combined factor analysis of all these items is shown in Table 7. As can be seen, there were no clearcut relationships between resources and decision making, since all the decision making items (including raising children) loaded on their own factor. Other groupings included the emotional resources items as a separate factor and pairings of husband and wife education, spending money, and time alone.

Use of Bases of Social Influence

A third method of assessing power utilization in marriage is to look at the specific methods used to exert power. Questions about the six French and Raven (1959) power bases were included in the questionnaire. The wives were asked to rate, on a five point scale from (1) Never to (5) Always, how often they and their husbands used each of the power bases. Results are shown in Table 8. Husbands in the High Violence group were reported to use all of the power bases more than other men except reward power (being nice to get what he wants) and informational power. Wives in the High Violence group also made relatively high use of coercive and other bases although they did not differ from the Low Violence group wives who also use these bases of power. No Violence wives were least likely to report the use of coercion, reward, referent, or expert power.

Insert Tables 8 and 9 about here

Table 9 again shows the relative use of each of the power bases by husbands and wives within each violence group by creating difference scores. Differences tended to be small overall. In general, wives reported using more of all of the bases in the No Violence group while husbands used more of the bases than the wives in the High Violence group. Differences were significant according to oneway analyses of variance for the coercive indicators of withdrawing emotionally, restricting the spouse's freedom, and using physical force to get one's way. High Violence men also used relatively more helpless and expert power than their wives. Once again, these data do not support the idea that violent husbands are unable to use noncoercive means of influence.

These data also support the previously reported tendency for women in all groups to make more use of reward and referent power along with sexual withdrawal as power strategies. However, men used more helpless power.

Table 10 further explores the interrelations of the power bases through a factor analysis of these items. As can be seen, the coercive power bases loaded on separate factors for husbands and wives. For husbands, restricting the activities of the wife loaded with using physical force. Emotional withdrawal and stopping sex formed a second factor for the husband. For the wife, all four of these types of coercion loaded together. In couples where the husband uses informational power, so does the wife as indicated by another factor. Joint use of reward power was also typical and again, was unrelated to any other power use in the couple. Finally, referent power in husband and wife formed a factor along with the husband's using expert and helpless power. Expert and helpless power for the wife did not load sufficiently high on any factor to be included in the factor analysis.

These data suggest that we still cannot definitively answer the question of how the various power bases relate to one another. Apparently some men who often use violent coercion also use other power bases regularly while others do not. It is interesting to note though that only reward power (doing something nice) and use of informational power are regularly reciprocated. Referent power also tends to be reciprocated, but it is found in relationships where the husband makes use of other powers. Contrary to popular belief, there was no evidence that use of coercion is reciprocated.

In another analysis, resource questions were factored along with the social power bases. Once again, the power bases did not load on the same factors as the resources. Thus, we must conclude that the level of resources held by husbands and wives do not affect their use of the various power bases.

Insert Table 11 about here

Finally, questions about surveillance were analyzed across the three groups as shown in Table 11. As can be seen, the data follow the same pattern found earlier; High Violent men were the most likely to have wives who felt that they were kept from going places they would like to go. They were also the least likely to do what their wives wanted them to do and their wives were least likely to know where they were when they were not at home.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Three approaches to marital power were reviewed: family decision making, resource theory, and social bases of power. Empirical evidence and theoretical implications relevant to a power analysis of conjugal violence were presented for each approach.

Looking first at resource theory, results of these analyses indicated strongest support for the resource deficiency theories of Goode (1971) and O'Brien (1971). Men who were relatively low in external resources relative to other men were the most violence, perhaps because they felt that their dominant male role was threatened.

However, their resource levels tended to be higher than those of their wives. Perhaps this high level of resource possession in their family also gave them a basis for using violence against their wives.

In terms of decision making, the violent men tended to make all the family decisions, except those concerning how to raise their children. Of course, it is impossible to say if this results from their use of violence to enforce their wishes or it was a precondition for the violence. These data do correspond with the results reported by Straus et al. (1980).

This pattern of the violent men having generally high levels of marital power was also indicated by the analysis of the bases of power used by these men. They made use of a variety of coercive means to enforce their wishes as well as using more expert, helpless, and referent power. Only reward and informational power were less used by this group.

Other analyses questioned the idea that the power to make family decisions and to use the various power bases is related to resources. No such relationships were found. This suggests that family power researchers need to be more careful in equating various conceptualizations of power in the family.

This study separated the violent families into two groups based on the level of the husband's violence; it was subsequently found that the Low Violence group was intermedite between the No Violence and High Violence groups. We had hypothesized that there might be some nonlinear relationship between the violence levels which might help to determine why some relationships exist for long periods of time with low levels of violence while others escalate rapidly to severe violence. However, the

present data is not supportive of this hypothesis to the extent that a linear relationship is indicated.

Finally, it must be kept in mind that this study is limited by the fact that it is based on self reports of wives about themselves and on their reports about their husbands. Since questionnaire studies have been found to show higher levels of husband dominance than observation studies (eg., Turk and Bell, 1972), the overall levels of husband dominance reported may be too high. However, we might also note that if the women believe the data they gave us, these perceptions may influence their behaviors, even if they are not completely accurate (eg., Bowerman and Bahr, 1973; Safilios-Rothschild, 1970). Also, the relatively high reported levels of coerciveness, a socially undesirable response, adds face validity to these reports.

The other problem of knowing only what the women reported clearly suggests that more research is needed based on responses of men. For ethical and practical reasons, we decided not to interview the battering husbands. They are reluctant to talk to interviewers and might have gotten upset at the idea of knowing that their wives were answering the questions we asked them. Most of the battered women did not tell their husbands that they had participated in the study. Although studies which have compared husbands and wives often find high levels of agreement (eg., Centers, et al., 1971; Scanzoni, 1965), this is not always the case (Brinkerhoff and Lupri, 1978; Cromwell and Cromwell, 1978; Douglas and Wind, 1978; Meyer and Lewis, 1976; and Turk and Bell, 1972), so that this source of bias cannot be ruled out. Despite this limitation, the present study suggests the usefulness of examining violence in marriage as a form of influence, and illustrates some of the

perspectives that may be taken and issues that may be addressed in future research on family violence and family power.

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TABLE 1

SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

Source	Battered	Control Battered	Control	TOTAL
Women's Shelters	50	--	--	50
Act 218 (Protection from Abuse)	36	--	--	36
Posted Advertisements	51	11	16	78
Neighborhood Letters	--	37	73	110
TOTALS	137	48	89	274

TABLE 2

SUMMARY OF

WIVES INJURIES FROM HUSBANDS' WORST VIOLENCE

	Battered	Control Battered	Control	
No force, no hurt	--	--	89	No Violence
Force used, no hurt	8	21	--	
No Physical injury	7	7	--	Low Violence
Simple superficial	35	9	--	
Severe superficial	51	6	--	
Severe trauma	24	4	--	High Violence
Extreme & permanent	12	--	--	

Table 3

Resources of Husbands and Wives

	Husband			Wife		
	No Violence	Low Violence	High Violence	No Violence	Low Violence	High Violence
Present Age	38.6	38.7	36.6	42.6	35.9	34.0**
Height	4.7	4.6	4.8	2.9	2.9	2.8
Weight	176	172	180	139	140	136
Income	4.2	4.0	3.9	1.9	2.2	1.9
Education	3.1	2.8	2.4*	3.0	2.6	2.4*
Number children	---	---	---	2.9	2.8	3.3
Hours away from family	9.9	15.6	24.0**	11.4	12.9	7.8*
Number friends	4.0	3.7	3.2*	4.5	4.3	3.9*
Spending money - $	33.4	51.5	86.3**	39.4	39.2	26.0
Gives presents	3.9	3.8	3.1**	4.2	4.1	4.0
Affectionate	3.8	3.6	2.8**	4.0	3.7	3.3**
Generally nice	4.3	3.5	2.7**	4.3	4.2	3.8**

All items on 5 point scales unless other noted.

**p < .01 - one way ANOVA

* p < .05 - one way ANOVA

Table 4
Relative Resources

Husband relative to Wife	Level of Violence: None	Low	High
Age (in years)	-5.0	2.7	2.5**
Height category*	1.9	1.7	2.0
Weight (in pounds)	37.2	33.8	43.7
Income*	2.3	2.1	2.3
Education*	0.1	0.1	0.1
Hours away from family	-1.6	0.8	17.1**
Number of friends	-0.3	-0.4	-0.7
Spending money	$1.16	-$17.78	-$71.00**
Gives presents*	-0.3	-0.3	-0.8*
Affectionate*	-0.3	-0.2	-0.5
Generally nice*	0.0	-0.6	-1.1**

* 1 to 5 scale with 1 = low and 5 = high.

Table 5
Decision Making of Couples

	Degree to Which Wife Decides: No Violence	Low Violence	High Violence
Where couple goes together	3.1[1]	2.8	2.4**
Whose friends couple sees	2.9	2.7	2.3**
Major purchase decisions	3.0	3.0	2.4**
Sexual initiation[2]	2.4	2.4	2.3
Resolving major disagreements	2.9	2.7	2.2**
How to raise children	3.2	3.3	3.3

Lower scores indicate more husband dominance
1 - Five point scale
2 - Three point scale

Table 6

Factor Structure for Decision Making Questions

	Factor 1	2
Decisions About		
Where to go as a couple	.74	--
Which friends to see	.54	--
Major purchases	.53	--
Sexual initiation	--	--
Who wins arguments	.74	--
How to raise children	--	.68

Table 7

Factor Analysis of Power Resources and Decision Making

	Factor											
Resource Items	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
H. Age	--	--	.98	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
W. Age	--	--	.93	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
H. Weight	--	--	--	--	--	--	.70	-	--	--	--	--
W. Weight	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	.45	--	--	--
H. Height	--	--	--	--	--	--	.68	--	--	--	--	--
W. Height	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	.63	--	--	--
H. Employment	--	--	--	--	--	.64	--	--	--	--	--	--
W. Employment	--	--	--	--	.82	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
H. Income	--	--	--	--	--	.78	--	--	--	--	--	--
W. Income	--	--	--	--	.68	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
H. Education	--	--	--	.74	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
W. Education	--	--	--	.81	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Children	--	--	.48	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
H. Alone Time	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	.42	.47
W. Alone Time	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	.48	--
H. Friends	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	.67	--	--
W. Friends	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
H. Spending $	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	.53	--	--	--	--
W. Spending $	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	.40	--	--	--	--
H. Affectionate	--	.77	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
W. Affectionate	--	.72	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
H. Nice	--	.69	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
W. Nice	--	.57	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Decision Making												
Where to Go	.68	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Whose Friends	.53	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Major Purchases	.57	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Win Arguments	.75	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Raise Kids	.43	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	-.40	--	--

Eigen values over 1.0, Loadings over .35. Gift giving and sexual initiation items did not load.

TABLE 8

Use of Social Power Bases

	Husband			Wife		
Coercion*	No Violence	Low Violence	High Violence	No Violence	Low Violence	High Violence
Emotional withdrawal	1.6	2.6	2.8**	2.0	2.6	2.6**
Restricts spouse	1.2	1.9	3.1**	1.1	1.3	1.3**
Stops sex	1.1	1.5	1.7**	1.3	1.6	2.0**
Physical force	1.0	1.9	2.9**	1.0	1.3	1.2**
Reward - Is nice	2.7	3.0	2.7	2.8	3.3	3.2
Helplessness	1.6	2.4	2.7**	1.8	2.1	2.0
Referent	1.5	2.1	2.5**	1.8	2.3	2.4**
Expert	1.8	2.6	3.2**	1.9	2.2	2.2*
Informational	2.5	2.7	2.8	2.5	2.8	2.7

* All scales from 1 - low to 5 - high

TABLE 9

Relative Use of Power Bases
in Husband as Compared to Wife

	Level of Violence		
Coercion	None	Low	High
Emotional withdrawal	-0.4	0.0	0.2*
Restricts spouse	0.1	0.6	1.8**
Stops sex	-0.2	-0.1	-0.4
Physical force	-0.0	0.6	1.6**
Reward - Is Nice	-0.1	-0.3	-0.3
Helplessness	-0.1	0.2	0.7**
Referent	-0.3	-0.2	0.1
Expert	-0.0	0.4	0.9**
Informational	0.0	-0.1	0.1

Table 10

Factor Analysis of Social Power Bases

	Factor					
Husband	1	2	3	4	5	6
Reference	--	--	.53	--	--	--
Helplessness	--	--	.38	--	--	--
Expert	.37	--	.60	--	--	--
Informational	--	--	--	.82	--	--
Emotional Withdrawal	--	--	--	--	--	.42
Restricts Spouse	.80	--	--	--	--	--
Stops Sex	--	--	--	--	--	.63
Physical Force	.73	--	--	--	--	--
Is nice	--	--	--	--	.66	--
Wife						
Reference	--	--	.35	--	--	--
Helplessness	--	--	--	--	--	--
Expert	--	--	--	--	--	--
Informational	--	--	--	.65	--	--
Emotional Withdrawal	--	.59	--	--	--	--
Restricts Spouse	--	.46	--	--	--	--
Stops Sex	--	.48	--	--	--	--
Physical Force	--	.48	--	--	--	--
Is nice	--	--	--	--	.72	--

Eigen values 1.0 or greater. Loadings over .35

TABLE 11

Restrictions on Freedom

	Husband			Wife		
	No Violence	Low Violence	High Violence	No Violence	Low Violence	High Violence
Spouse knows where * person is	4.3	3.7	3.0**	4.4	4.4	4.4
Kept from going places	1.3	1.6	1.5	1.6	2.2	2.8**
Generally does what spouse wants	3.8	3.3	2.7**	3.9	3.8	3.9

* 1 to 5 scales